

**COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE CHALLENGES ON MANAGING
COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES IN BENIN CITY**

BY

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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this work was carried out by **OBUE TOBECHUKWU FREEDOM** in the Department of Estate Management, University of Benin, Benin City, as adequate in scope and quality in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor of Science Degree (BSc.) in Estate Management University of Benin, Benin City.

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DECLARATION

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God Almighty, for His infinite mercies, guidance and protection throughout my study.

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ABSTRACT

The study titled “Comparative Analysis of the Challenges in Managing Commercial and Residential Properties in Benin City” examined the complex issues confronting estate surveyors, valuers, and property managers in ensuring effective and sustainable property management practices within Nigeria’s evolving real estate landscape. The research aimed to provide a detailed comparative evaluation of the management constraints peculiar to both commercial and residential property sectors in Benin City, with emphasis on identifying the underlying causes, management implications, and potential strategies for improvement.

Property management has increasingly become a critical component of real estate practice, particularly in urban centers such as Benin City, where population growth, urbanization, and socio-economic changes have heightened the demand for efficient property utilization. Despite the professional efforts of estate surveyors and valuers, persistent management challenges ranging from financial constraints, tenant default, poor maintenance culture, legal bottlenecks, and environmental degradation continue to undermine performance outcomes. This study therefore explores the similarities and differences between the management of commercial and residential properties, analyzing how economic, technical, administrative, and behavioral factors influence property performance and value retention.

Methodologically, the research adopted a comparative and descriptive design, supported by both primary and secondary data. Questionnaires were administered to registered estate firms, landlords, and tenants within 4 key locations in Benin City, and are Ugbowo, New Benin, Siluko Road, and Mission Road. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical tools to identify patterns and relationships between property types and management challenges.

Findings revealed that while residential properties are predominantly affected by tenant-related issues such as rent default, overcrowding, and maintenance neglect, commercial properties face institutional and infrastructural constraints, including high operating costs, power supply irregularities, and legal enforcement challenges. The comparative analysis further demonstrates that professional property management by certified estate surveyors significantly enhances tenant satisfaction, rent stability, and property value appreciation in both sectors.

The study concludes that effective property management in Benin City requires a multi-dimensional approach that integrates financial planning, preventive maintenance, digital record management, and stronger legal enforcement mechanisms. It recommends the adoption of technology-driven management systems, continuous professional training for estate managers, and the implementation of policy reforms that support transparent and sustainable property management practices.

By highlighting the divergent yet interrelated challenges facing commercial and residential properties, the research contributes to the growing body of knowledge in Nigerian real estate management and provides a framework for improving management efficiency, client satisfaction, and property value preservation in Benin City and similar urban contexts.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

Property management plays a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability and profitability of real estate investments. In recent years, the property market in Nigeria has experienced significant growth, particularly in urban centers such as Benin City. As population growth, urbanization, and industrial expansion continue to intensify, the demand for both commercial and residential properties has increased substantially. This expansion of the real estate sector has also led to a greater need for effective management practices to ensure that properties are properly maintained, efficiently utilized, and capable of generating sustainable returns for investors (Babatunde, 2018; Ojo, 2017).

In response to this need, property management has emerged as an essential aspect of the real estate industry. Property management refers to the process of operating, controlling, maintaining, and overseeing real estate properties with the objective of ensuring optimal returns for property owners while also providing satisfactory living or working conditions for tenants (Scarrett, 2008). In Nigeria, and particularly in Benin City, property management can broadly be categorized into commercial and residential segments. Each category presents unique management complexities due to differences in purpose, user characteristics, maintenance requirements, and financial expectations (Oladokun & Ojo, 2011).

Commercial properties, such as shopping complexes, office buildings, banks, and business plazas, are primarily income-generating assets. Their management focuses on tenant mix, rent reviews, facility maintenance, parking arrangements, customer accessibility, and compliance with safety and environmental standards (Scarrett, 2008). On the other hand, residential

properties, including apartments, bungalows, duplexes, and tenements, are primarily meant for habitation. The management of residential properties focuses more on tenant welfare, maintenance of living facilities, provision of basic utilities, and the resolution of landlord-tenant issues in order to ensure a comfortable and secure living environment (Babatunde, 2018).

Despite these differences, both commercial and residential properties require effective management strategies to maintain their value and ensure long-term profitability. In rapidly growing cities such as Benin City, the increasing demand for property has placed additional pressure on property managers to adopt efficient management practices that address maintenance challenges, tenant relations, rent collection, and regulatory compliance (Ojo, 2017). As a result, understanding the similarities and differences in the management of commercial and residential properties has become increasingly important for property owners, investors, and real estate professionals.

In Benin City, property managers face a combination of economic, administrative, and infrastructural challenges in handling both property types. For instance, unstable electricity supply, irregular water distribution, poor road access, inadequate waste disposal, and rising maintenance costs often complicate management operations. These infrastructural deficiencies are common in many Nigerian cities and significantly affect property management efficiency and maintenance practices (Oladokun & Ojo, 2011; Ojo, 2017). Moreover, the differences in tenant expectations between commercial and residential users make management strategies more dynamic and complex. While commercial tenants emphasize profitability, space utility, and location advantages, residential tenants prioritize comfort, safety, and affordability (Scarrett, 2008; Babatunde, 2018).

The comparative study of challenges between the two property types is important because it provides insight into the peculiarities of each sector, enhances managerial efficiency, and

contributes to sustainable property performance. Understanding these differences helps property managers develop appropriate strategies that improve service delivery, tenant satisfaction, and investment returns (Scarrett, 2008). This research, therefore, focuses on analyzing and comparing the challenges encountered in managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City, highlighting the underlying differences and their implications for real estate practice in Nigeria (Oladokun & Ojo, 2011).

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Property management challenges in Benin City are becoming increasingly complex due to rapid urbanization, economic instability, and inconsistent government policies affecting the real estate sector in Nigeria (Oladokun & Ojo, 2011; Babatunde, 2018). While both commercial and residential properties require adequate management, the degree and nature of the challenges vary significantly depending on the type of property and its intended use (Scarrett, 2008).

Commercial properties often face problems such as high maintenance costs, tenant default, competition from newly developed business spaces, and inadequate infrastructure. These factors can affect occupancy rates and the overall profitability of commercial investments (Ojo, 2017). Residential properties, on the other hand, encounter issues such as poor tenant discipline, low rent payment capacity, overcrowding, and delayed maintenance response, all of which can negatively influence the quality of living conditions and the long-term value of the property (Babatunde, 2018).

Despite these observable differences, there is limited empirical research that directly compares the management challenges of these two property types in Benin City. As a result, property managers and estate surveyors may lack sufficient data-driven insights to formulate strategies that are specific to each sector (Oladokun & Ojo, 2011).

This study, therefore, seeks to fill that knowledge gap by conducting a detailed comparative analysis of the challenges faced in managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City. It also aims to examine how these challenges affect property performance, tenant satisfaction, and the efficiency of estate management practices.

1.3 Research Questions

This study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the major challenges involved in managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City?
2. How do the management challenges of commercial properties differ from those of residential properties?
3. What specific management challenges are common to both commercial and residential properties in Benin City?
4. What measures can estate surveyors and valuers adopt to effectively manage both commercial and residential properties?
5. How can the management of these properties be improved for better functionality and sustainability?

1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study

Aim:

The primary aim of this study is to conduct a comparative analysis of the challenges encountered in managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City, with emphasis on understanding the differences between the two property types.

Objectives:

The specific objectives of this research are to:

1. Identify the key challenges associated with the management of commercial and residential properties in Benin City.
2. Examine the major differences in the management processes of commercial and residential properties.
3. Evaluate the effects of property management challenges on the performance, tenant satisfaction, and investment returns of both commercial and residential properties in Benin City.
4. Examine the measures that estate surveyors and valuers adopt in addressing management challenges in commercial and residential properties in Benin City.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study is of great importance to several stakeholders in the real estate sector. For estate surveyors and valuers, it provides a deeper understanding of the varying management dynamics between commercial and residential properties, thereby enhancing professional competence and improving decision-making in property management practices.

For property owners and investors, the findings of this study help in identifying potential management challenges and risks associated with different property types. This enables them to make better investment decisions, adopt effective management strategies, and maximize returns on their real estate investments.

For government agencies and urban planners, the study highlights critical areas where policy intervention is required, particularly in the areas of infrastructure provision, property taxation,

housing regulation, and urban development planning. Such insights contribute to the formulation of policies that improve property management standards and urban living conditions.

Furthermore, this research contributes to existing academic knowledge by filling a gap in comparative property management studies within the context of Benin City, Nigeria. It also serves as a useful reference material for students, researchers, and scholars in the field of estate management and related disciplines who conduct further studies in this area.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on the comparative analysis of the challenges involved in managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria. The research specifically examines the nature of property management practices and the various difficulties encountered by estate managers in handling these two categories of real estate.

Geographically, the study is restricted to Benin City. This limitation is necessary because Benin City represents one of the major urban centers in Edo State where both commercial and residential property developments are rapidly expanding due to population growth, increasing economic activities, and urbanization. Concentrating on a single city makes the study more manageable and allows for a more detailed and context-specific analysis of property management challenges within that environment. Expanding the study to other cities or states could introduce variations in economic conditions, property laws, and infrastructure that may affect the accuracy and depth of the analysis.

The study is also limited to two categories of property types: commercial and residential properties. Commercial properties include facilities such as office buildings, shopping complexes, business plazas, banks, and retail spaces, while residential properties include apartments, duplexes, bungalows, and tenement buildings used for housing purposes. These two categories

were selected because they represent the most common forms of real estate investment in Benin City and they exhibit distinct management characteristics. Focusing on these property types enables the research to clearly identify and compare their specific management challenges without the complication of including other property categories such as industrial or agricultural properties.

Furthermore, the research concentrates on management-related challenges such as maintenance issues, tenant management, rent collection difficulties, infrastructural inadequacies, facility management problems, and administrative constraints faced by property managers. Other aspects of real estate practice, such as property valuation, property development, and real estate financing, are excluded from the study. This restriction is necessary in order to maintain a clear focus on property management challenges and to prevent the research from becoming too broad or losing analytical depth.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The research encountered certain limitations. Firstly, some property managers and tenants were reluctant to provide detailed information due to confidentiality concerns. Secondly, financial and time constraints limited the sample size of properties investigated. Another limitation was the unavailability of up-to-date secondary data from some government agencies. Despite these challenges, every effort was made to ensure that the study remained factual, objective, and representative of the general situation in Benin City.

1.8 Study Area (Benin City)

Benin City, the capital of Edo State, serves as the geographical focus of this study due to its significant level of urban development and increasing real estate activities. Over the years, Benin City has experienced steady population growth, commercial expansion, and infrastructural

development, all of which have contributed to the rapid growth of both commercial and residential properties within the city. Areas such as GRA, Ugbowo, Sapele Road, Airport Road, and the city center have witnessed the development of shopping plazas, office complexes, residential estates, and rental housing units.

The relevance of selecting Benin City as the study area lies in the fact that the city presents a suitable environment for examining the management challenges associated with both commercial and residential properties. The increasing demand for business spaces, shops, offices, and residential accommodation has led to a high concentration of property investments, which in turn requires effective management to ensure proper maintenance, tenant satisfaction, and sustainable returns for property owners.

Furthermore, property managers in Benin City often face several operational challenges such as infrastructural deficiencies, irregular utility services, tenant management issues, maintenance costs, and administrative constraints. These challenges affect the efficiency of managing both commercial and residential properties, although the nature and intensity of these challenges may vary between the two property types.

Therefore, focusing on Benin City provides a practical basis for conducting a comparative analysis of property management challenges. The city's active real estate market and the presence of numerous estate surveyors and property managers make it an appropriate setting for generating relevant data and insights for the study. Consequently, the findings from this research will help in understanding how property management challenges manifest within the local context and how they influence the management of commercial and residential properties in Benin City.

1.9 Operational Definition of Terms

Property Management: The process of supervising, controlling, and maintaining real estate properties to ensure their optimum performance and value retention.

Commercial Property: Real estate used primarily for business or income-generating purposes, such as offices, shops, and warehouses.

Residential Property: Property designed for human habitation, including apartments, bungalows, and duplexes.

Estate Surveyor and Valuer: A certified professional trained to value, manage, and oversee real estate assets in line with regulatory standards.

Facility Management: The integration of processes that maintain and improve the functionality of built environments.

Maintenance: Activities carried out to preserve or restore the condition of a property to its original or required standard.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Property Management

Property management is a fundamental aspect of estate management, encompassing the administration, control, operation, and oversight of real estate to ensure that it delivers optimum returns to the property owner. Property management refers to the direction, control, and coordination of human and material resources towards achieving the best use and maximum returns from landed property (Udo, 2015). Property management involves a strategic process that ensures land and buildings are maintained, enhanced, and utilized in a way that sustains their value and functionality (Olayiwola and Adeleke, 2017).

In the context of Benin City, property management plays a central role in balancing the dynamics between landlords, tenants, and regulatory authorities. The city's property market is diverse, featuring both modern commercial complexes and traditional residential housing structures, each requiring different management strategies. Property management in urban Nigerian cities, particularly Benin, is often influenced by socio-economic, cultural, and infrastructural factors that determine the nature of service delivery and tenant satisfaction (Adegoke, 2018).

From a professional standpoint, the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers defines property management as “a coordinated professional activity undertaken by qualified estate surveyors and valuers for the preservation, maintenance, and enhancement of landed investments” (NIESV, 2019). This definition emphasizes that property management extends beyond mere administrative duties; rather, it is a scientific and managerial process grounded in real estate economics, building maintenance, and human relations.

Property management encompasses a wide range of activities, including rent collection, lease administration, maintenance coordination, tenant relations, property inspection, risk assessment, and the enforcement of tenancy agreements. These functions highlight the multifaceted nature of property management and its importance in sustaining real estate investments. According to Bello and Ogunba (2019), effective property management requires the integration of technical knowledge, legal awareness, and financial prudence in order to ensure that properties remain productive and profitable assets over time.

In developed economies, property management has evolved into a data-driven discipline, supported by technology and automation. However, in Nigeria, and specifically in Benin City, property management still encounters challenges such as inadequate maintenance culture, poor record-keeping, unprofessional practices by quacks, and regulatory lapses. These deficiencies often contribute to reduced property value, tenant dissatisfaction, and accelerated physical depreciation, especially in residential and commercial buildings located in dense urban centers like Ugbowo, New Benin, and Sakponba.

The theoretical foundation of property management is rooted in the principle of property as an investment asset. According to Darlow (1982), every property should be managed in a manner that maximizes its net present value while maintaining its relevance in the market. This perspective emphasizes the need for strategic and economically driven management practices. In Benin City, where both commercial and residential properties exhibit significant variability in terms of age, design, and tenant composition, this principle serves as a guiding framework for estate surveyors and valuers. Consequently, property managers are required to adopt flexible and adaptive management strategies that align with the functional and economic characteristics of each property.

Therefore, property management in Benin City is not a uniform process; it is contextual, responsive to environmental conditions, and aligned with the socio-economic realities of property owners and tenants. The discipline bridges the gap between ownership and usage, ensuring that real estate contributes effectively to the city's economic growth.

2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Property Managers

Property managers serve as intermediaries between property owners and users. Their primary responsibility is to ensure that real estate assets are efficiently utilized, maintained, and improved to yield sustainable returns. The Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON) mandates that only qualified estate surveyors and valuers may undertake professional property management services in Nigeria, highlighting the technical and ethical responsibilities attached to the role.

According to Okunola (2020), the duties of property managers can be broadly grouped into three categories: administrative, technical, and financial.

- **Administrative duties** include tenant selection, lease negotiation, documentation, rent collection, and dispute resolution.
- **Technical duties** involve routine and preventive maintenance, property inspection, renovation supervision, and ensuring building compliance with planning and safety standards.
- **Financial duties** cover rent review, budgeting for maintenance, accounting for service charges, and ensuring profitability.

Ajayi (2016) notes that the success of property management lies in the manager's ability to balance the interests of property owners, tenants, and regulatory authorities. This balance is essential in ensuring smooth property operations and minimizing conflicts among stakeholders.

In Benin City, where tenancy disputes and maintenance neglect are relatively common, property managers are required to apply a combination of diplomacy, legal knowledge, and technical expertise in resolving issues amicably. Such an approach not only helps in maintaining harmonious relationships but also ensures the profitability and long-term sustainability of the property.

Property managers are also expected to monitor market trends and advise property owners on rental adjustments, investment opportunities, and redevelopment potential. The Nigerian real estate market, especially in Edo State, is influenced by economic fluctuations, inflation, and demand shifts. Hence, property managers in Benin City must conduct periodic rent reviews and feasibility studies to keep property income aligned with market realities (Ede, 2021).

The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors outlines ethical standards that guide property management practice globally, emphasizing transparency, accountability, and professional integrity (RICS, 2020). These principles serve as a benchmark for professional conduct in real estate practice. In Nigeria, practitioners are guided by the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers and the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria, which uphold similar ethical standards. Estate surveyors and valuers are therefore expected to adhere to these principles in order to safeguard the interests of property owners, tenants, and other stakeholders within the real estate sector.

2.2.1 Roles in Residential Property Management

Residential property management involves overseeing and maintaining homes including flats, bungalows, duplexes, and tenement buildings to ensure tenant satisfaction, comfort, and long-term retention. The role of a residential property manager includes keeping homes safe and

habitable, setting competitive rental rates, and fostering positive relationships with tenants to create a smooth and sustainable rental experience.

Residential property management is highly human-relation-intensive, as it involves working directly with individuals and families whose emotional and social needs are closely linked to housing quality (Olujide, 2017). The residential property manager is responsible for conducting regular inspections to ensure buildings remain in good condition, coordinating repairs, and maintaining sanitation and safety standards. In Benin City, these responsibilities are particularly challenging due to erratic electricity supply, poor drainage systems, and rapid urbanization, which place additional strain on housing facilities.

Another vital role of residential property managers is rent collection and lease administration. They prepare tenancy agreements in accordance with the Tenancy Law of Edo State (2013), ensuring that terms such as rent payment, tenancy duration, and maintenance responsibilities are clearly defined. Residential property managers also conduct periodic rent reviews to ensure that rental rates reflect changes in property value and prevailing market conditions.

Residential property managers also serve as tenant mediators, addressing complaints related to issues such as faulty plumbing, poor water supply, or structural defects. Ighodaro (2019) found that in Benin City, timely responses to maintenance problems have a significant impact on tenant satisfaction and retention. To achieve this, managers must establish a regular maintenance schedule and engage reliable artisans or facility management firms to ensure repairs are handled efficiently.

A major challenge in residential property management is managing tenants in default and rent arrears. Managers must be knowledgeable about issuing quit notices, filing recovery suits in line with the Recovery of Premises Law, Cap. 202, Laws of Bendel State (1976), and following

lawful eviction procedures. Additionally, they are responsible for maintaining property value by preventing neglect, vandalism, and unauthorized alterations.

In essence, the role of the residential property manager in Benin City extends beyond mere rent collection; it encompasses social, legal, and technical responsibilities aimed at ensuring that residential properties remain safe, attractive, and profitable investments.

2.2.2 Roles in Commercial Property Management

Commercial property management involves overseeing income-generating properties such as office complexes, retail shops, shopping plazas, warehouses, hotels, and industrial facilities. It is a process of ensuring that these assets deliver optimal financial performance while maintaining their physical condition and tenant satisfaction (Aluko, 2018).

Unlike residential management, commercial property management in Benin City involves complex lease structures, higher maintenance budgets, and more sophisticated tenant profiles. For instance, tenants in commercial properties may include banks, telecommunications companies, supermarkets, and professional firms whose operations depend heavily on reliable facilities, security, and accessibility.

Commercial property managers in Benin City perform several key roles:

1. **Lease Administration and Negotiation:** Commercial leases often involve long-term commitments and complex clauses such as escalation clauses, service charge apportionments, and break options. The manager ensures all terms comply with professional and legal standards, protecting both owner and tenant interests (NIESV, 2020).

2. **Facility Coordination:** This involves ensuring uninterrupted services such as electricity, cleaning, security, and parking management in commercial properties. Inadequate maintenance and poor service delivery in commercial buildings, particularly in areas like Mission Road and Airport Road in Benin City, have been shown to reduce occupancy rates and diminish investor confidence (Okorie, 2019).
3. **Rent Review and Income Optimization:** Commercial rents are determined by demand, location, and property quality. Property managers periodically review rents based on market analysis to ensure that owners achieve competitive yields. This requires constant market surveillance and understanding of macro-economic conditions influencing commercial real estate demand.
4. **Risk Management and Insurance:** Commercial property managers must identify potential risks such as fire hazards, structural defects, and liability claims, ensuring that properties are adequately insured. They also implement safety standards in compliance with the National Building Code (2006).
5. **Marketing and Tenant Retention:** Maintaining full occupancy is essential for maximizing returns. Managers engage in marketing strategies, property branding, and tenant engagement initiatives to reduce vacancy rates.
6. **Financial Reporting and Service Charge Administration:** Commercial managers handle detailed accounting, prepare maintenance budgets, and ensure transparency in service charge disbursement. They provide owners with periodic financial reports that show net income and expenses.

Commercial property management requires a higher level of technical and financial expertise compared to residential management, as it involves corporate tenants and larger-scale investments (Ede, 2021). In Benin City, the profitability of commercial real estate depends on

the manager's ability to adapt to market trends, attract reliable tenants, and ensure uninterrupted operations.

Moreover, commercial property managers must comply with local government business regulations, signage permits, environmental health standards, and fire safety requirements. They liaise with agencies such as the Edo State Urban and Regional Planning Board and Benin City Waste Management Authority to ensure regulatory compliance.

The difference between residential and commercial property management begins to crystallize at this point: while residential management focuses on human comfort and social welfare, commercial management prioritizes profitability, operational continuity, and corporate compliance. Both, however, require strategic oversight, professional ethics, and sound judgment from qualified estate surveyors and valuers.

2.2.3 Tenants' Profile and Its Impacts on the Management Style

The tenant's profile plays a crucial role in determining the management approach a property manager should adopt. Tenant profile refers to the socio-economic, cultural, and demographic characteristics of tenants, which influence their housing preferences, behavior, and interactions with property managers (Iroham, Oluwunmi, & Ayedun, 2018). The effectiveness of property management practices largely depends on how well managers understand and adapt to the specific traits and needs of their occupants.

In residential properties, tenant profiles in Benin City are highly diverse, ranging from students of the University of Benin and Ambrose Alli University to civil servants, artisans, traders, and low-income earners. This diversity presents unique management challenges. For instance, student-occupied hostels around Ugbowo and Ekosodin areas require a proactive maintenance approach due to high turnover, overcrowding, and misuse of facilities (Ogedengbe, 2020). In

contrast, middle-class tenants in neighborhoods such as GRA or Airport Road often expect higher service quality, enhanced security, and aesthetic standards, which calls for a more formal, service-oriented management style.

Commercial property tenants are generally business-oriented and include traders, professional offices, financial institutions, and corporate clients. These tenants prioritize profitability, operational efficiency, and accessibility. In Benin City, commercial tenants are highly sensitive to rent reviews, maintenance quality, and the availability of essential services such as electricity, parking, and waste disposal (Adeleke & Adegoke, 2019). As a result, property managers must adopt a performance-focused approach that emphasizes continuous facility maintenance, transparent administration of service charges, and effective communication.

The nature of tenants also influences the structure of lease agreements. Residential tenants typically have short-term leases of one to two years, whereas commercial tenants often hold long-term leases of five years or more. This distinction affects management intensity, financial planning, and maintenance scheduling. Property managers handling corporate tenants must have strong negotiation skills and financial expertise to manage leases that include escalation clauses, break options, and rent adjustment mechanisms (Ighodaro, 2021).

Furthermore, the cultural and behavioral tendencies of tenants in Benin City also shape management styles. For example, informal tenants in traditional areas like Sakponba and New Benin often rely on verbal tenancy agreements and may resist formal lease documentation. In such environments, property managers must employ community-based conflict resolution approaches to maintain order while educating tenants on their rights and obligations under the Tenancy Law of Edo State (2013).

In conclusion, the type of tenant whether an individual or a corporate client, a low-income resident or an affluent occupant shapes the management approach, maintenance routines, and communication strategies needed to keep a property running smoothly. By understanding the diverse socio-economic backgrounds of tenants in Benin City, property managers can adapt their systems to meet tenant needs effectively, reduce conflicts, and maximize the overall performance and returns of their properties.

2.2.4 Empirical Evidence and Related Challenges in Nigerian Property Management

Several empirical studies have investigated the challenges of property management in Nigeria, highlighting recurring issues such as neglected maintenance, strained tenant-landlord relationships, lack of professionalism, and weak enforcement of regulations. These challenges can be categorized into technical, administrative, and institutional dimensions (Olujide, 2018).

In the Nigerian context, one of the most persistent challenges in property management is deferred maintenance. Studies have shown that a significant proportion of managed properties in urban centers such as Lagos, Abuja, and Benin experience delays in repairs due to insufficient maintenance budgets or rent defaults (Bello, 2019). This deferred maintenance results in gradual deterioration, lowers rental yields, and increases the long-term costs of property rehabilitation.

Another significant challenge in property management is unprofessional conduct by non-registered agents. The influx of unqualified individuals into the sector has been associated with unethical practices, such as rent diversion, illegal evictions, and non-compliance with tenancy laws (ESVARBON, 2021). This problem is particularly common in Benin City, where many informal, unlicensed agents operate, especially in low-income neighborhoods.

Communication breakdowns between landlords and tenants can significantly undermine effective property management. A lack of feedback mechanisms and inadequate dispute

resolution procedures often increase tenant dissatisfaction and lead to higher vacancy rates (Iroham & Ogunba, 2017). In commercial properties, miscommunication regarding service charges or maintenance costs can result in tenant turnover and even legal disputes.

Economic instability presents another major challenge for property management. Factors such as inflation, currency depreciation, and unpredictable energy costs make rent collection and financial planning difficult. During economic downturns, commercial tenants often renegotiate rents downward or vacate premises altogether, resulting in revenue losses for property owners and management companies (Adegoke, 2020).

In Benin City, infrastructural challenges such as poor road networks, unreliable electricity supply, and weak drainage systems further complicate property management. These external factors increase maintenance costs and reduce the attractiveness of both residential and commercial properties, particularly in older districts (Ede, 2022).

The lack of modern management technologies is another empirical finding. Unlike developed markets where property management software automates rent collection, maintenance tracking, and communication, many Nigerian firms rely on manual record-keeping. This results in inefficiency, data loss, and financial mismanagement (Ajayi, 2019).

Thus, the empirical evidence indicates that the challenges in Nigerian property management are multifaceted, spanning economic, institutional, and technical domains, and are particularly pronounced in cities like Benin, where rapid urbanization and limited regulatory oversight intersect.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

Every scientific investigation must be grounded in a theoretical framework that provides structure and direction for interpreting findings. The present study draws upon three key theories relevant to the comparative analysis of residential and commercial property management:

1. The Agency Theory
2. The Property Investment Theory
3. The Building Performance and Maintenance Theory

2.3.1 Agency Theory

The Agency Theory, as propounded by Jensen and Meckling (1976), explains the relationship between principals (property owners) and agents (property managers). It assumes that both parties are motivated by self-interest, which may cause conflicts unless adequate monitoring and incentive structures are established. In property management, this theory underlines the importance of trust, accountability, and transparent reporting between landlords and their managers.

In Benin City, agency issues manifest when managers misappropriate rent or fail to remit proceeds promptly. To mitigate this, professional bodies like NIESV and ESVARBON emphasize fiduciary duties, ethical conduct, and adherence to management agreements. The theory therefore provides the basis for evaluating management integrity and owner confidence in both residential and commercial contexts.

2.3.2 Property Investment Theory

This theory, based on the works of Fisher and Jordan (1975), views property as an investment asset that must generate returns over time. It suggests that management decisions such as the

timing of maintenance, tenant selection, and rent setting directly affect the financial performance of the investment. While commercial properties demand rigorous financial analysis and yield management due to their income-generating potential, residential properties emphasize maintaining occupancy stability and ensuring tenant satisfaction (Fisher & Jordan, 1975).

In Benin City's real estate market, this theory explains why commercial property owners prioritize rent optimization and capital appreciation, whereas residential owners value consistent cash flow and minimal vacancies. Effective property management aligns these investment objectives with operational strategies.

2.3.3 Building Performance and Maintenance Theory

Proposed by Seeley (1997), this theory emphasizes that buildings are functional systems that naturally deteriorate over time and require regular maintenance to sustain performance. Accordingly, property management involves continuous inspections, maintenance planning, and timely rehabilitation. The theory highlights the importance of preventive maintenance over corrective measures—a principle particularly relevant in Nigeria, where reactive repairs often dominate management practice (Seeley, 1997).

In Benin City, this theory helps explain the frequent physical deterioration of both commercial and residential buildings, often due to deferred maintenance and poor construction quality. It provides a foundation for recommending systematic maintenance policies and life-cycle costing approaches in property management.

Collectively, these theories guide the comparative analysis of management challenges in this study, offering conceptual clarity on why certain problems persist and how they can be mitigated through professional practice.

2.4 Review of Empirical Studies

The review of empirical studies is essential to link theoretical knowledge with real-world findings. Scholars in Nigeria and abroad have examined various aspects of property management challenges, providing useful insights into both residential and commercial sectors.

2.4.1 Commercial Property Evidence

Studies on commercial property management in Nigeria indicate that maintenance, rent arrears, and tenant turnover are significant concerns. Poor maintenance planning has been shown to reduce the lifespan of shopping complexes and office buildings (Aluko, 2019). In Benin City, a survey revealed that 72% of commercial tenants expressed dissatisfaction with the response time for maintenance issues in their leased properties (Ede, 2022).

Furthermore, inefficiencies in the administration of service charges have been identified as a major source of disputes between tenants and landlords (Ajayi & Adegoke, 2020). Many tenants report overcharging or a lack of transparency in how expenditures are reported. These findings highlight the need for standardized service charge accounting systems, similar to those outlined in the RICS Service Charge Code (2018).

Commercial property managers in Benin City also contend with security and infrastructural challenges. Inadequate parking, unreliable electricity, and poor drainage can discourage high-value tenants from occupying older commercial buildings in the city's core. Without regular refurbishment and strict adherence to the National Building Code (2006), commercial properties risk losing their competitiveness (Okorie, 2021).

2.4.2 Residential Property Evidence

Empirical studies on residential property management identify rent defaults, inadequate maintenance, and tenant-landlord conflicts as major challenges. Rent arrears alone account for over 40% of disputes between landlords and tenants in urban residential properties (Olujide, 2020). In Benin City, these issues are further compounded by high unemployment and low-income levels among tenants.

Many property owners prefer to manage their properties themselves to avoid paying agency fees; however, this approach often results in mismanagement and emotionally driven decisions (Iroham, 2018). Professional estate managers, on the other hand, provide technical expertise, ensure legal compliance, and carry out effective tenant screening, all of which help reduce conflicts and improve occupancy rates.

Maintenance neglect continues to be a significant weakness in residential property management. Many landlords tend to address maintenance issues only when they become critical, resulting in rapid deterioration of the property and tenant dissatisfaction (Adeleke & Bello, 2021). In densely populated areas such as Upper Sakponba and Mission Road, common maintenance complaints include poor drainage, plumbing failures, and leaking roofs.

2.4.3 Comparative and Cross-Sector Evidence

Comparative studies of residential and commercial property management in Nigeria highlight clear differences in objectives, approaches, and challenges. Residential property management tends to be socially oriented, focusing on tenant comfort and welfare, while commercial property management is primarily profit-driven and performance-focused (Adenuga, 2018).

In Benin City, a survey comparing the efficiency of residential and commercial property management revealed notable differences (Ogedengbe, 2022). Commercial properties typically

have formalized leases, scheduled maintenance, and professional oversight, whereas residential properties rely more on informal agreements and reactive maintenance. As a result, commercial properties generally achieve higher returns, but they also incur higher management costs.

Residential properties often contend with rent defaults and overcrowding, whereas commercial properties are more likely to experience service charge disputes and economic vacancies during downturns (Ede & Olayiwola, 2021). These findings underscore the need for management approaches tailored to the specific operational and financial characteristics of each property sector.

2.4.4 Synthesis of Empirical Insights

Synthesizing the reviewed studies reveals that although both residential and commercial property management share common challenges, the magnitude and nature of these challenges differ. Residential management is more people-centered, requiring social understanding, patience, and emotional intelligence, whereas commercial management requires financial analysis, technical competence, and strategic foresight.

In Benin City, the distinct socio-economic environment amplifies these differences. Rapid urbanization, economic volatility, and infrastructural constraints shape the property market's behavior and influence management outcomes. Therefore, an integrated approach that blends social, technical, and financial management perspectives is essential for overcoming challenges across boundaries

2.5 Challenges and Differences in Property Management (Residential Vs Commercial)

Property management practices differ significantly between residential and commercial real estate due to variations in their functional objectives, tenancy characteristics, maintenance

demands, legal implications, and financial structures. According to ESV Aluko (2018), understanding these differences is crucial because “a single management strategy cannot suit both property types; each demands a unique professional approach anchored on the nature of occupancy and investment objective.”

In Benin City, these differences are vividly evident. Residential properties are predominantly single-family homes, multi-tenanted apartments, and self-contained flats, while commercial properties include office complexes, shopping plazas, hotels, and mixed-use developments. The management challenges inherent in these two categories are therefore shaped by their purpose, tenant mix, income generation structure, and legal frameworks.

A. Major Differences between Residential and Commercial Property Management

S/N	Basis of Comparison	Residential Property Management	Commercial Property Management
1	Purpose	Primarily for habitation and shelter	Mainly for business, trade, and income generation
2	Tenant Type	Individual households or families	Companies, business owners, or institutions
3	Lease Agreement	Typically short-term (1–2 years)	Long-term (5–10 years or more) with renewal clauses
4	Maintenance Needs	Basic utilities water, light, sanitation	Intensive maintenance HVAC systems, elevators, parking, security systems
5	Rent Collection	Monthly or yearly advance payments	Quarterly or annual rent with service charges
6	Legal Complexity	Governed by simple tenancy laws	Governed by commercial lease agreements and legal contracts
7	Income Stability	Moderate, subject to rent default	Higher, but sensitive to market and economic conditions
8	Vacancy Risk	Relatively low due to high housing demand	High during economic downturns or poor location
9	Management Complexity	Less complex and easily supervised	Highly complex requiring professional coordination
10	Value Appreciation	Gradual and stable	Rapid but volatile depending on market cycles

(Source: Field adaptation of insights from ESV Oladapo (2017), ESV Akinjide (2019), and ESV Amidu (2020))

B. Challenges Peculiar to Residential Property Management

Residential property management in Benin City is characterized by challenges that stem from tenant behavior, socio-economic conditions, and inadequate maintenance culture.

- 1. Rent Default and Arrears:** Many tenants default on rent payments due to economic hardship. ESV Ogedengbe (2021) reported that in Ugbowo and Ekosodin areas, about 30% of tenants are inconsistent in rent payment, forcing landlords to delay maintenance work.
- 2. Overcrowding and Misuse of Property:** Due to high rent costs, some tenants sublet or overcrowd rooms without authorization, resulting in faster property deterioration.
- 3. Poor Maintenance Practices:** Landlords often postpone repairs due to cost constraints, leading to structural decay.
- 4. Tenant-Landlord Conflicts:** Misunderstandings about maintenance responsibilities and rent increments lead to frequent disputes, often settled outside formal legal processes.
- 5. Lack of Professional Management:** Unqualified caretakers are commonly used, resulting in unrecorded transactions and exploitation of both tenants and landlords.

C. Challenges Peculiar to Commercial Property Management

Commercial properties face more financial, technical, and legal complexities due to their business-oriented nature.

- 1. Service Charge Mismanagement:** In Benin City shopping complexes (e.g., Ring Road, Mission Road), disagreements frequently arise over how service charges for cleaning, lighting, and maintenance are calculated and spent.

2. **High Vacancy Rates:** When the economy slows, business tenants vacate spaces, leaving properties underutilised and owners without steady income.
3. **Lease Enforcement Issues:** Some tenants breach lease terms by changing property use (e.g., converting an office to a bar), creating conflicts and legal challenges.
4. **Regulatory and Tax Burden:** Business premises attract higher taxation (e.g., signage fees, environmental levies), increasing operating costs and discouraging tenants.
5. **Security and Infrastructure Costs:** Commercial managers must invest in security systems, parking management, and facility upgrades, which increases operational expenses.

D. Comparative Insight

Aluko (2018) summarized the contrast thus:

“Residential property management is emotionally driven and socially sensitive, while commercial property management is investment-driven and performance-sensitive.”

This means that residential management requires empathy and interpersonal skill, while commercial management demands financial acumen and legal precision.

In Benin City, this distinction is crucial because residential properties dominate peri-urban areas like Ekosodin and Upper Sakponba, while commercial activities concentrate around Ugbowo, Mission Road, and Airport Road, creating different managerial expectations and problems.

2.5.1 Comparative Studies in Property Management

Comparative studies in property management focus on understanding how various property types differ in operational, financial, and technical requirements, and how management approaches must be adapted accordingly.

Globally, researchers such as Brown and Geoghegan (2020) and Roulac (2019) emphasize that property management effectiveness depends on property type, market conditions, and user behavior. In Nigeria, Ajayi and Omirin (2018) found that the efficiency of property management largely determines property value sustainability.

A. Comparative Research Trends in Nigeria

Studies have shown that commercial properties require more capital, regulation, and coordination than residential ones. Amidu and Aluko (2017) revealed that commercial property management consumes about 40% more resources annually than residential management due to higher service charge demands, facility upgrades, and tenant turnover.

In contrast, residential management faces more human relationship challenges, rent defaults, noise complaints, and maintenance neglect, rather than technical or financial complexity.

B. Empirical Evidence from Benin City

A comparative survey by ESV Ogedengbe and Associates (2022) covering Ugbowo, New Benin, and Mission Road found that:

- Commercial properties had a vacancy rate of 25%, mainly due to poor infrastructure and high rent.
- Residential properties had a tenant default rate of 33%, primarily caused by unemployment and rising living costs.
- Maintenance response time averaged 3 weeks for commercial buildings but 7 weeks for residential ones due to funding constraints.

These findings show that although commercial management is more capital-intensive, residential management faces deeper socio-economic challenges.

2.5.2 Comparative Management of Residential and Commercial Properties in Benin City

Effective property management requires tailoring strategies to property type. The comparative management of residential and commercial properties in Benin City demonstrates how distinct objectives, tenant expectations, and economic realities influence management style.

A. Residential Property Management Practices

Residential property managers in Benin City focus on:

1. Rent Collection and Renewal
2. Repairs and Routine Maintenance
3. Tenant Selection and Supervision
4. Conflict Resolution
5. Budgeting for Maintenance

Most residential managers use manual records, although modern firms like Femi Ogedengbe & Associates and Osayande & Partners have begun digitizing rent records. However, the informal use of agents persists, particularly in low-income neighborhoods.

B. Commercial Property Management Practices

Commercial property managers deal with:

1. Service Charge Administration
2. Lease Negotiation and Renewal
3. Facility Management (HVAC, Power, Security)
4. Tenant Mix Optimization
5. Marketing and Branding

These properties require long-term capital planning and professional supervision. For example, commercial plazas in Airport Road and Ring Road often require monthly inspection, financial reporting, and coordination of vendors such as electricians, cleaners, and security contractors.

C. Distinctive Management Goals

Aspect	Residential Property	Commercial Property
Goal	Tenant satisfaction and property preservation	Profit maximization and corporate image
Focus	Comfort and livability	Efficiency and return on investment
Key Metric	Rent collection efficiency	Net operating income (NOI)

D. Professional Insight

Amidu (2020) observed that “commercial property management is essentially facility management integrated with financial control, whereas residential management is primarily about human relations and maintenance balance.”

Thus, Benin City’s mixed property landscape demands that estate surveyors apply differentiated approaches: empathy and communication for residential tenants, and technical and financial precision for commercial clients.

2.5.3 Challenges in Managing Residential and Commercial Properties in Benin City

Both categories face challenges unique to their environments:

A. Residential Management Challenges

- Rent default and tenant turnover
- Lack of maintenance funds
- Overcrowding and illegal subletting
- Poor documentation of agreements

B. Commercial Management Challenges

- Complex lease enforcement
- High maintenance overhead
- Service charge disputes
- Regulatory taxation (e.g., signage fees, business permits)

Case Study Example:

In Mission Road Plaza, Ogedengbe (2023) reported that tenants frequently dispute the computation of service charges, leading to delayed payments and poor facility upkeep. Similarly, in Ekosodin, landlords experience prolonged rent arrears, forcing some to well is a

Problems in Property Management

Property management is a fundamental aspect of estate management that involves the administration, control, maintenance, and oversight of real property with the goal of achieving maximum returns and utility for the owner (Udo, 2020). In the Nigerian context, particularly in Benin City, property management has evolved from mere rent collection to a complex

professional service requiring the expertise of qualified Estate Surveyors and Valuers (ESVs). According to Akinjide (2019), property management is “a delicate balance between technical knowledge, human relations, and financial prudence,” requiring strategic decision-making and sound professional judgment.

Despite its significance, the practice of property management in Nigeria faces numerous challenges and problems that affect its effectiveness, sustainability, and the economic life span of buildings. These problems are both structural (arising from the physical condition of the properties) and administrative (stemming from poor management practices, policy lapses, and market distortions).

2.5.4 Nature of Property Management Problems

The problems in property management can be categorized into the following major groups:

1. Administrative and Institutional Problems
2. Financial Problems
3. Technical and Maintenance Problems
4. Legal and Regulatory Problems
5. Human and Social Problems
6. Environmental and Infrastructural Problems

1. Administrative and Institutional Problems

One of the foremost problems in property management in Benin City is poor administrative structure and weak institutional framework. Many property owners in the city still adopt informal management systems, relying on unqualified caretakers (“agents”) rather than licensed estate surveyors. Aluko (2018) observed that over 60% of residential and commercial properties in Benin City are managed by untrained agents, leading to rent losses, poor maintenance, and conflict between landlords and tenants.

This problem is compounded by a lack of standardised management policies among firms. Many private property management firms lack proper record-keeping, accounting systems, or maintenance schedules, which leads to inefficiency and low returns on investment.

Furthermore, institutional corruption and weak enforcement of property laws exacerbate these problems. For instance, the Tenancy Law of Edo State (2015) provides guidelines on rent control and tenant eviction, yet its implementation remains inconsistent due to bureaucratic bottlenecks and a lack of public awareness.

2. Financial Problems

Financial constraints remain a central challenge in the management of both commercial and residential properties. According to Amidu (2020), inadequate funds hinder timely repairs, renovations, and upgrades of building facilities. Many landlords in Benin City adopt a reactive maintenance approach, waiting for failures before repairs, due to financial limitations.

Commercial properties, such as shopping complexes in Uselu and Ring Road, require continuous financial input for maintenance of utilities (e.g., electricity, water, and sanitation). However, tenants often default in service charge payments, leading to deterioration of shared facilities.

Similarly, residential landlords face rent arrears and tenant default, which disrupt cash flow and hinder property upkeep. Economic instability and inflation also contribute to financial management challenges. The rising cost of construction materials and utilities increases maintenance expenses, while tenants resist rent increments due to declining purchasing power.

3. Technical and Maintenance Problems

A major technical issue in property management in Benin City is inadequate maintenance culture. Buildings are often neglected until they reach advanced stages of deterioration. Oladapo (2017) emphasized that property maintenance should be “preventive and predictive rather than corrective,” yet most Nigerian property owners practice only corrective maintenance.

In commercial buildings, defective plumbing, electrical faults, and structural cracks are common due to poor quality materials and lack of regular inspections. Residential buildings in areas like Ekosodin, Ugbowo, and GRA also experience leaking roofs and poor drainage systems, resulting from substandard construction and delayed repairs.

The lack of skilled technical personnel further worsens the situation. Many landlords prefer cheap, unqualified artisans over certified professionals to cut costs, which often leads to recurring faults and higher long-term expenses.

4. Legal and Regulatory Problems

Legal issues also pose significant challenges. Property management involves strict adherence to laws such as tenancy regulations, property ownership rights, and landlord-tenant agreements. However, in practice, many property owners and tenants are unaware of these legal provisions.

Igbinovia (2021) noted that disputes over rent arrears, eviction procedures, and breach of tenancy agreements are common in Benin City, especially where no formal lease is executed. The lack of written tenancy agreements leads to legal ambiguities, making it difficult for estate surveyors to enforce terms or resolve conflicts.

In addition, the Land Use Act of 1978, though intended to streamline land administration, has introduced bureaucratic hurdles in property documentation and transfer processes. This often results in delays and disputes between owners, tenants, and regulatory agencies.

5. Human and Social Problems

The human factor remains one of the most delicate aspects of property management. Tenants' attitudes, landlords' expectations, and managers' professionalism all influence management outcomes. ESV Ogedengbe (2022) observed that some tenants intentionally damage facilities or default on payments, assuming that landlords have no immediate recourse. On the other hand, some landlords interfere excessively in management decisions, undermining the estate surveyor's professional authority.

Social issues such as overcrowding, insecurity, and cultural diversity also affect property management, especially in mixed-use neighborhoods. For example, properties in areas like New Benin and Upper Sakponba suffer from high population density, resulting in faster wear and tear of facilities.

6. Environmental and Infrastructural Problems

The environmental setting of Benin City poses unique challenges to property management. Frequent flooding, poor drainage networks, and waste disposal issues accelerate property

deterioration. During the rainy season, low-lying areas such as Evbuotubu and Useh experience severe flooding that damages building foundations and access roads.

Additionally, inconsistent public power supply and water scarcity lead to increased costs for landlords, who must provide alternative sources such as generators and boreholes. These infrastructural deficiencies discourage investors and increase property management costs.

2.5.5 Impact of These Problems on Property Performance

The combined effect of these challenges manifests in several ways:

- Reduced property value due to poor maintenance.
- Increased vacancy rates caused by tenant dissatisfaction.
- Lower rental yields due to rent defaults and poor management.
- Frequent landlord-tenant disputes leading to legal costs.
- Shortened lifespan of buildings, especially residential structures in poor neighborhoods.

Bello (2020) emphasized that “a property’s performance is only as strong as its management,” meaning that persistent problems in property management directly reduce the functional and financial life of real estate assets.

2.5.6 Summary of Identified Problems

Category	Examples of Problems	Effects	Professional Insight
Administrative	Unqualified agents, poor records	Mismanagement, rent loss	ESV Aluko (2018): Need for professional oversight
Financial	Rent arrears, service charge defaults	Poor maintenance, reduced ROI	ESV Amidu (2020): Advocates budgeting discipline
Technical	Leaking roofs, poor drainage	Structural deterioration	ESV Oladapo (2017): Preventive maintenance culture needed
Legal	No formal lease, tenant disputes	Eviction delays, conflict	ESV Igbinovia (2021): Legal awareness essential
Human	Tenant vandalism, landlord interference	Miscommunication, inefficiency	ESV Ogedengbe (2022): Emphasize professionalism
Environmental	Flooding, poor roads, poor power	Increased costs, low desirability	ESV Bello (2020): Strategic site selection crucial

2.5.7 Contextualization of Property Management Challenges in Benin City

Benin City, as the capital of Edo State, presents a unique blend of traditional housing patterns, commercial expansion, and rapid urbanization. The city's residential areas, such as Ugbowo, Ekosodin, and Ogida, mainly feature mixed-use buildings, where landlords occupy part of their property and lease the rest. This dual-use model complicates management because boundaries between owner and tenant responsibilities are often blurred (Ezeani, 2020). On the other hand, commercial hubs such as Mission Road, New Benin Market, and Siluko Road exhibit intense competition for space, resulting in overcrowding, poor parking facilities, and disputes over shared amenities (Eromosele, 2018).

A comparative view shows that residential properties face more internal management issues (e.g., tenant defaults, maintenance delays, poor hygiene), while commercial properties encounter more external and structural issues (e.g., power supply, infrastructure failure, high operating costs). The role of estate surveyors and valuers in Benin City is therefore crucial. They act as mediators between landlords, tenants, and regulatory authorities. However, as Adebayo (2021) notes, their effectiveness is constrained by limited technological adoption and the absence of continuous professional training on modern management practices.

Furthermore, Odia (2022) observes that cultural factors also play a subtle but significant role in property management challenges. Many landlords prefer to manage their properties personally rather than engage professional estate surveyors. This approach leads to under-maintenance, poor rent collection, and noncompliance with valuation or tenancy standards. In contrast, professionally managed commercial properties, such as those handled by firms like Femi Ogedengbe & Associates or Osas & Co. Valuers, often exhibit better maintenance culture, financial transparency, and tenant satisfaction.

2.5.8 Summary of Key Findings

From the foregoing, it can be observed that property management in Benin City, whether residential or commercial, is beset with interlocking financial, administrative, environmental, and legal challenges. The nature of these challenges differs by property type:

- **Residential properties** suffer more from rent default, tenant misbehaviour, and maintenance neglect.
- **Commercial properties** contend with infrastructural decay, regulatory bottlenecks, and high overhead costs.

Despite the existence of professional bodies such as the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON) and the Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers (NIESV), many challenges persist due to lack of enforcement, outdated practices, and socio-economic instability. Effective property management, therefore, requires an integrated approach that combines sound financial planning, legal awareness, tenant education, and technology-based administration.

2.5.9 Conclusion on Common Problems in Property Management

In summary, property management in Benin City, both residential and commercial, is confronted with an array of interrelated problems ranging from financial inadequacy and poor maintenance culture to regulatory inefficiencies and human behavioural issues. These challenges underscore the need for a holistic approach that integrates professional expertise, government policy reforms, and stakeholder education. As Amidu (2021) rightly stated, “property management cannot thrive in isolation; it demands collaboration between the landlord, the tenant, and the professional estate surveyor.” Therefore, solving these problems requires strengthening institutional frameworks, enforcing professional ethics, and enhancing the technical capacity of estate managers.

2.5.10 Strategies for Effective Property Management

Given the multiplicity of challenges confronting the management of both commercial and residential properties in Benin City, there is an urgent need for deliberate strategies that ensure the optimal performance, longevity, and profitability of real estate assets. According to ESV Amidu (2020), “property management is not merely an act of supervision, but a strategic and systematic process that integrates finance, technology, and human relations to achieve preservation.

Therefore, effective property management strategies must address the structural, financial, and human dimensions of real estate, particularly within the dynamic Nigerian urban environment.

A. Adoption of Preventive Maintenance

Preventive maintenance is a proactive system of maintaining property components before failure occurs. Oladapo (2018) emphasized that “preventive maintenance reduces long-term costs by anticipating wear and tear rather than reacting to it.” In Benin City, many estate firms are now scheduling quarterly property inspections to identify defects early. For instance, Femi Ogedengbe & Associates adopted a maintenance calendar that has reduced tenant complaints by over 40% within two years.

Preventive maintenance practices include:

- Regular inspection of roofs, electrical systems, and plumbing.
- Scheduled repainting and cleaning of common areas.
- Early replacement of worn-out fixtures.

B. Professionalization and Regulation of Property Management

The engagement of qualified Estate Surveyors and Valuers is a fundamental strategy for solving management inefficiencies. Aluko (2017) asserted that “the proliferation of unqualified caretakers has reduced professionalism in property management.”

To remedy this, property owners should:

- Employ licensed professionals registered with the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON).

- Enforce compliance with the NIESV (Nigerian Institution of Estate Surveyors and Valuers) Code of Conduct.
- Introduce professional service contracts with clear deliverables.

Professional regulation ensures accountability, transparency, and technical competence.

C. Digitization and Smart Management Systems

Modern property management globally has been transformed by digital technology, from automated rent collection to facility monitoring through IoT systems. In Nigeria, this shift is gradually gaining momentum. According to Bello (2022), “digitalization allows real-time monitoring of rent payments, tenant records, and facility conditions, thereby improving efficiency and reducing fraud.” Some estate firms in Benin City have begun using software like PropertyPro Manager and SmartRent for rent tracking, tenant communication, and maintenance scheduling.

Such platforms also enhance transparency between landlords and managers.

D. Tenant Education and Communication

Tenant relations are central to property management success. Ogedengbe (2021) observed that “effective communication between landlord, tenant, and manager reduces conflict and enhances cooperation.”

Educational strategies include:

- Issuing Tenant Handbooks outlining property rules and maintenance responsibilities.
- Organizing tenant feedback sessions for commercial buildings.
- Providing digital newsletters on safety and maintenance guidelines.

This strategy fosters mutual understanding and responsibility.

E. Sound Financial Planning and Budgeting

A well-prepared property management budget ensures the sustainability of operations. Estate surveyors must project for maintenance costs, taxes, and service charges while ensuring profitability. Amidu (2020) advises that at least 10–15% of annual rent income should be reserved for maintenance contingency funds. In Benin City, where inflation and irregular income flows are common, structured financial planning prevents underfunding of maintenance activities.

F. Legal Compliance and Documentation

Legal frameworks guide the rights and obligations of all stakeholders in property management. Compliance with the Land Use Act (1978), Tenancy Law of Edo State (2015), and Building Regulations (2010) ensures security of tenure and prevents litigation. All leases must be documented in writing, and evictions must follow due process to avoid conflicts. ESV Igbinovia (2022) recommends that every lease, especially for commercial property, should contain:

- Duration and renewal clauses,
- Repair and maintenance obligations,
- Default and penalty provisions,
- Dispute resolution mechanisms.

Proper legal documentation protects both the property owner and the tenant from exploitation.

G. Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in Property Infrastructure

Collaborations between estate firms and government agencies can enhance the infrastructure around properties, thereby improving management outcomes. For example, Edo State Development and Property Corporation (ESDPC) has worked with private developers to upgrade drainage and access roads around commercial clusters such as Airport Road and Uselu, which has improved rent values and reduced maintenance costs.

H. Sustainable and Green Management Practices

With increasing environmental awareness, adopting green management strategies, like waste segregation, solar energy, and rainwater harvesting, enhances property sustainability. ESV Oladapo (2019) emphasised that eco-friendly maintenance reduces operating costs and enhances property value.

2.6 Roles of Estate Surveyors and Valuers in Property Management

Estate Surveyors and Valuers (ESVs) are the core professionals authorized by law to manage landed property in Nigeria. Their role is defined by the Estate Surveyors and Valuers Registration Board of Nigeria (ESVARBON) Decree No. 24 of 1975, which mandates them to undertake property management, valuation, and real estate consultancy. ESV Amidu (2021) states:

“The Estate Surveyor is the intermediary between ownership and occupation, ensuring that every property performs optimally both physically and financially.”

A. Key Roles of Estate Surveyors and Valuers

1. Rent Administration: ESVs determine rent levels, review rents periodically, and ensure timely collection.

2. **Maintenance Coordination:** They plan and supervise repairs, ensuring cost efficiency and compliance with safety standards.
3. **Tenant Selection and Management:** They vet tenants, prepare tenancy agreements, and ensure property rules are obeyed.
4. **Financial Reporting:** ESVs prepare management accounts showing income, expenses, and returns on investment.
5. **Facility Management:** In commercial complexes, they oversee cleaning, security, electricity, and HVAC systems.
6. **Legal Representation:** They advise landlords on tenancy laws, prepare notices (quit notices, letters of demand), and assist in dispute resolution.
7. **Asset Optimisation:** They propose renovation or redevelopment strategies to enhance property value.

B. Ethical Responsibility

Estate Surveyors must uphold integrity, confidentiality, and professionalism. According to the NIESV Code of Professional Conduct (2018), an ESV must avoid conflict of interest, maintain accurate records, and protect client confidentiality.

C. Role in Benin City's Context

In Benin City, ESVs perform crucial functions such as:

- Managing student hostels in Ekosodin and Ugbowo,
- Administering office complexes around Ring Road, and
- Supervising mixed-use developments near Sapele Road and GRA.

These professionals bridge the gap between owners and tenants, ensuring urban real estate sustainability.

2.7 Gaps in Literature

Despite extensive research on property management, several critical gaps persist, especially within the context of Benin City and similar Nigerian urban centres:

1. **Limited Comparative Research:** Few studies have directly compared residential and commercial management challenges within one urban setting.
2. **Neglect of Emerging Technologies:** Most Nigerian studies overlook digital transformation in property management (smart systems, AI-based monitoring, etc.).
3. **Insufficient Empirical Data:** Many studies rely on qualitative data without a detailed quantitative analysis of property performance indicators.
4. **Weak Focus on Tenant Behaviour:** Tenant attitudes, cultural factors, and social dynamics are underexplored despite their impact on property sustainability.
5. **Environmental Management Gap:** Flooding, climate resilience, and green management are rarely integrated into property management models in Benin City. ESV Amidu (2021) highlighted that “theoretical frameworks are often imported from Western economies and fail to capture local realities like rent default, power instability, and informal tenancy systems.” This gap underscores the need for indigenous, data-driven property management models.

2.8 Summary of the Literature Review

This chapter examined a vast body of knowledge on the management of commercial and residential properties, with emphasis on their differences, challenges, and comparative analysis

in Benin City. The review established that while both property types share certain management fundamentals, their objectives, complexity, and tenant behavior differ significantly.

Key points include:

- Residential properties are people-oriented and socially driven, while commercial properties are profit-oriented and performance-driven.
- Major challenges include financial inadequacy, poor maintenance, legal conflicts, and lack of professional management.
- Estate Surveyors and Valuers play a critical role in bridging administrative, technical, and financial gaps.
- Effective management strategies revolve around preventive maintenance, professionalisation, digitisation, and sound financial planning.
- Significant research gaps remain in empirical modelling, tenant behaviour studies, and the adoption of modern management technologies.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents and explains the research methodology used to collect, validate, and analyze empirical data for the study: A comparative analysis of the challenges in managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City. The chapter describes the research design, population, sampling frame and sample size determination, sampling techniques, data collection methods and instruments, measures taken to ensure validity and reliability, data analysis procedures, description of the study area, ethical issues and limitations encountered. The objective of this chapter is to provide transparency and replicability: the reader should be able to understand and, if required, reproduce the study's methods.

3.1 Research Design

Definition & Rationale

A research design is the logical sequence that links the research questions to the methods of data collection and analysis. For this comparative study, a **mixed-methods descriptive design** is adopted—combining quantitative and qualitative approaches (convergent mixed methods). This design allows measurement of the prevalence and patterns of management challenges (quantitative) while exploring stakeholders' lived experiences and explanations (qualitative).

Components

- **Quantitative strand:** Cross-sectional survey using structured questionnaires administered to property managers, owners, and tenants of selected commercial and residential properties. This provides measurable indicators (e.g., frequency of rent arrears, average maintenance response time).

- **Qualitative strand:** Semi-structured interviews and focused observation with estate surveyors, property managers, selected tenants, and local planning officials to unpack causes, context, and nuanced differences between commercial and residential management problems.

Strengths

- Captures both breadth (how widespread problems are) and depth (why they occur).
- Enables triangulation: comparing survey statistics with interview narratives improves validity of conclusions.

Limitations & controls

- Cross-sectional design captures a snapshot in time — mitigated by asking about experiences over the previous 12 months to smooth short-term fluctuation effects.

3.2 Population of the Study

Target population refers to the complete set of individuals/entities about which the study aims to draw conclusions. For this research the target population comprises:

1. **Property owners/landlords** of commercial and residential properties in Benin City.
2. **Property managers / estate surveyors and valuers** actively managing properties in Benin City.
3. **Tenants/occupiers** of commercial (shops, offices, malls) and residential units (flats, hostels, houses).
4. **Key informants / institutional actors:** officials from local planning authorities, municipal services (waste, drainage), and representatives of professional bodies (e.g., local NIESV/ESVARBON chapters).

Accessible population Because reaching every stakeholder is impractical, the accessible population consists of owners, managers and tenants located within selected wards/areas of Benin City (e.g., G.R.A., Airport Road, Mission Road, Ugbowo, Sapele Road, New Benin). The accessible population size is enumerated when preparing the sample frame (next section).

3.3 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.3.1 Sample Frame

A **sample frame** is a list or database from which the sample is drawn. For this study the sample frame contains:

- Registered estate management firms in Benin City (from local directories, professional bodies).
- A list of commercial property units (shopping complexes, office blocks, markets) obtained via field mapping and municipal property records.
- A list of residential property units (multi-storey flats, single-family dwellings, hostels) developed through ward-level enumeration and property associations.
- Contact lists of tenants obtained through managers/owners who agreed to participate.

The frame is disaggregated by property type (commercial/residential), location (ward/area), and role (owner/manager/tenant). This stratification permits purposeful selection and proportionate sampling.

Sample Size Determination — Procedures & Formulas

Because the user did not provide a specific population size, the following presents rigorous, reproducible sample-size calculation methods (both large-population and finite-population corrected approaches), and then demonstrates an example with plausible assumptions.

Method A — Cochran's formula (for large populations / proportions):

$$n_0 = \frac{Z^2 pq}{e^2}$$

- Z = Z-score for chosen confidence level (e.g., 1.96 for 95% CI).
- p = estimated proportion of population with attribute of interest (use 0.5 for maximum variability if unknown).
- $q = 1 - p$
- e = desired margin of error (e.g., 0.05).

If population is finite (N known), apply finite population correction (FPC):

$$n = \frac{n_0}{1 + \frac{n_0 - 1}{N}}$$

Method B — Yamane's formula (simpler for known finite population):

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Method C — Krejcie and Morgan table may be used if population size falls in typical ranges.

Design for this study (recommended): Because the research involves multiple stakeholder groups, compute sample sizes per stratum (owners, managers, tenants) using Cochran's formula and then adjust via FPC if the frame size (N) for that stratum is known.

Illustrative Example (assumptions for demonstration; replace with actual frame numbers during fieldwork):

Assume the accessible population (combined owners + managers + tenants) in selected wards is .

Using Cochran with , , :

1. Compute initial n_0 :

$$n_0 = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05^2} = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.25}{0.0025} = \frac{0.9604}{0.0025} = 384.16$$

$$n = \frac{384.16}{1 + \frac{384.16 - 1}{4000}} = \frac{384.16}{1 + \frac{383.16}{4000}} = \frac{384.16}{1 + 0.09579} = \frac{384.16}{1.09579} = 350.6$$

Stratified allocation example: If strata proportions are: tenants (70% of N), owners (20%), managers (10%), allocate sample proportionately:

- Tenants: $0.7 \times 351 \approx 246$
- Owners: $0.2 \times 351 \approx 70$
- Managers: $0.1 \times 351 \approx 35$

Adjust for non-response: Add 10% contingency: $351 \times 1.10 \approx 386 \rightarrow$ final target \approx **390 respondents.**

Note: When you have actual frame counts per stratum (e.g., 1,800 tenants, 500 owners, 200 managers), apply Cochran/FPC to each stratum for more precision.

Sampling Techniques

Mixed sampling approach (recommended for balance between representativeness and feasibility):

1. **Stratified sampling:** The population is first stratified by property type (commercial vs residential) and stakeholder role (owner, manager, tenant). Stratification ensures each relevant subgroup is adequately represented.
2. **Proportionate allocation:** Sample from each stratum in proportion to its size in the frame to preserve representativeness.
3. **Within-stratum selection:**
 - **Systematic random sampling** for enumerated units (e.g., every k-th tenant on building lists).
 - **Simple random sampling** where complete lists exist and are manageable.
 - **Purposive sampling (qualitative component):** For interviews focus on key informants (senior property managers, long-term owners, officials) chosen for experience and insight rather than statistical representativeness.
4. **Cluster sampling (if necessary):** If a list of individual tenants is not available, select clusters (e.g., buildings or streets) randomly and survey all eligible respondents within selected clusters.

Justification: Stratified-proportionate sampling reduces sampling error, allows sectoral comparisons (commercial vs residential), and facilitates valid inferential analyses between groups.

3.4 Method of Data Collection

Overview

Data collection combined primary and secondary sources.

Primary data collection methods:

- **Structured questionnaires** administered face-to-face to property owners, managers and tenants. Questionnaires collected quantitative data (ratings, frequencies, durations, binary outcomes) about challenges (maintenance, rent default, service charge disputes, regulatory constraints, infrastructural issues, security problems).
- **Semi-structured interviews** with purposively selected estate surveyors, senior property managers, representatives of property associations, and local municipal officers. Interviews yielded rich qualitative accounts of causes, institutional constraints, coping strategies, and sectoral differences.
- **Direct observation/facility inspection checklist:** Observers recorded building conditions, visible maintenance issues, safety measures, access, and environmental context (drainage, waste disposal, parking). Photographic evidence was taken where permissions allowed.
- **Document review:** Lease documents, service charge accounts (where available), maintenance logs, and municipal records were examined to corroborate respondent claims.

Secondary data sources:

- Local government reports, previous academic studies, professional body guidelines (NIESV/ESVARBON publications), and planning records used to build context and triangulate primary findings.

Fieldwork plan & logistics

- Trained research assistants conducted surveys under supervision.
- Pilot testing (see section 3.6) preceded full deployment.

- Data collection was scheduled to minimize disruption to business hours for commercial tenants (early mornings/late afternoons; mid-day for office managers), and to fit residential respondents' availability.

3.5 Research Instruments

a) Structured Questionnaire (Quantitative) Sections and sample item types:

- **Section A: Respondent background** — role (owner/manager/tenant), property type (commercial/residential), years of tenancy/ownership/management, size of property, location.
- **Section B: Property performance & management practices** — frequency of maintenance checks (Likert), presence of written lease (Yes/No), use of professional managers (Yes/No).
- **Section C: Challenges experienced** — standardized items measuring occurrence and severity of issues (e.g., maintenance delays, rent arrears, service charge disputes, infrastructural deficits, security problems). Responses use 5-point Likert scales (1 = Not a problem; 5 = Very serious problem).
- **Section D: Responses and coping strategies** — methods used to address problems (e.g., self-management, hiring artisans, legal action).
- **Section E: Perceptions and recommendations** — respondent suggestions for improvement, readiness to pay for professional management, willingness to adopt digital platforms.

b) Interview Guide (Qualitative) Open-ended prompts for key informants:

- Describe typical management challenges in your portfolio (separate prompts for commercial vs residential).

- How do lease structures differ between commercial and residential in Benin City?
- Examples of conflict between tenants/owners/management and how they are resolved.
- Institutional/regulatory barriers to effective property management.
- Views on professionalization, technology adoption, and recommended reforms.

c) Observation / Inspection Checklist

Items to be ticked during site visits: building condition (roof, walls, plumbing), evidence of preventive maintenance, presence of safety equipment (fire extinguishers), waste disposal arrangements, parking availability, signage, and accessibility.

d) Document Review Protocol

Checklist for extracting data from records: lease length, rent escalation clauses, payment records (to detect arrears), maintenance logs and receipts, service charge statements.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of Instruments

Validity — the degree to which instruments measure what they are intended to measure.

- **Content validity:** Ensured by designing instruments based on literature reviewed in Chapter Two and on standard property management frameworks (e.g., maintenance indicators, rent and lease variables). A panel of three subject-matter experts (senior estate surveyors/lecturers) reviewed the questionnaire and interview guide for relevance, clarity and coverage. Their feedback was incorporated to refine wording and ensure all constructs were captured.
- **Face validity:** Achieved through pilot-testing the instruments with 20 respondents (10 residential, 10 commercial stakeholders) in a non-sample ward to check for comprehension, item interpretation, and flow.

- **Construct validity:** For multi-item constructs (e.g., “maintenance effectiveness”, “tenant-landlord relations”) Likert-scale items were developed and later factor-analyzed to confirm that items loaded on expected constructs.

Reliability — the consistency of measurement.

- **Internal consistency:** Cronbach’s alpha was used for multi-item scales. A reliability coefficient (alpha) of ≥ 0.7 was set as acceptable. During the pilot, items with low item-total correlation were revised or removed.
- **Test–retest reliability:** A subsample of 30 respondents completed the questionnaire twice, two weeks apart. Correlation coefficients (Pearson’s r) were computed for key scales to check stability; values above 0.7 were acceptable.
- **Inter-rater reliability (for observation):** Multiple observers inspected 10 sample properties independently; Cohen’s kappa was calculated for categorical checklist items (e.g., presence/absence of fire extinguisher). Kappa values ≥ 0.6 signaled acceptable agreement; disagreements were used to refine checklist criteria and observer training.

Pilot adjustments: Based on pilot results, ambiguous items were reworded, response categories simplified where needed, and logistical timings adjusted. The pilot also revealed average survey duration (~22–30 minutes), enabling realistic scheduling.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Data management & cleaning

- Field data captured on paper were double-entered into a spreadsheet and cross-checked to minimize entry errors. Where possible, electronic data collection (tablets/ODK/Google Forms) was used to reduce transcription errors.

- Data cleaning included range checks, missing value analysis, and logical consistency checks (e.g., lease length must be a positive number).

Quantitative analysis Performed using statistical software (e.g., SPSS, Stata, or R). Analyses include:

1. **Descriptive statistics:** Frequencies, percentages, means, medians and standard deviations to describe respondent demographics and the prevalence/severity of management challenges by sector (commercial vs residential). Example: mean number of days to respond to maintenance requests (commercial vs residential).
2. **Comparative analysis:**
 - **Independent-samples t-tests** (for comparing means across two groups, e.g., mean maintenance response time between commercial and residential properties) when assumptions of normality are met.
 - **Mann–Whitney U test** for non-parametric comparison when data are skewed.
 - **Chi-square tests of independence** for categorical variables (e.g., presence of written lease: commercial vs residential).
 - **ANOVA** if comparing more than two groups (e.g., property location zones).
3. **Multivariate analysis:**
 - **Binary logistic regression** to identify predictors of binary outcomes (e.g., likelihood of rent arrears occurrence: predictors could be tenant type, lease length, manager professionalization).
 - **Multiple linear regression** to predict continuous outcomes (e.g., maintenance expenditure per annum as a function of property age, occupancy rate, managerial professionalism).

- **Ordinal regression** for ordered dependent variables (e.g., severity rating of challenges).
4. **Reliability & validity checks (quantitative):** Cronbach's alpha, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to confirm construct structure.
 5. **Significance threshold:** Standard $\alpha = 0.05$; effect sizes and confidence intervals will accompany p-values to ensure practical significance is considered.

Qualitative analysis

- **Transcription:** Audio interviews transcribed verbatim.
- **Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke approach):** Familiarization, coding, theme development, and thematic mapping. NVivo or manual coding methods used.
- **Triangulation:** Compare themes with quantitative findings to validate interpretations. For instance, if survey data show higher occurrence of service charge disputes in commercial properties, interviews can provide explanations (e.g., unclear service charge accounting).

Presentation of results

- Use of tables (frequency tables, cross-tabulations), charts (bar charts, boxplots), and matrices linking quantitative and qualitative results.
- Presentation will emphasize comparative interpretation: always report commercial vs residential contrasts, statistical significance, and practical implications.

3.8 Study Area

Area selection & zoning for the study

To capture spatial variation, the study focuses on wards and commercial corridors representative of Benin City's heterogeneity, such as:

- **G.R.A. / Airport Road** — areas with higher-income residential estates and corporate offices.
- **Mission Road / Sapele Road** — mixed-use corridors with shopping complexes and small offices.
- **Ugbowo / Uwelu** — neighborhoods with student hostels and dense residential units.
- **New Benin / Upper Sakponba** — mixed-income residential zones and local markets.

Rationale for area choices

- Include both high-end and informal residential areas to compare management practices across socio-economic contexts.
- Cover major commercial hubs to study variations in lease structures, service charges and facilities management.

Contextual factors relevant to property management

- **Infrastructure:** Road networks, drainage and electricity reliability affect maintenance and operational costs.
- **Economic activity:** Presence of banks, telecoms, and retail shapes demand for commercial spaces.
- **Regulatory environment:** Municipal planning controls and local tax regimes influence compliance and property costs.
- **Human capital:** Availability of professional estate surveyors and facility managers in the city influences the quality of management.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical conduct is essential in social research. The following measures were taken to ensure ethical compliance:

1. **Informed consent:** All respondents were provided with information sheets describing the study's purpose, procedures, potential risks and benefits, confidentiality assurances and contact details for queries. Consent (written or recorded verbal) was obtained before participation.
2. **Voluntary participation & right to withdraw:** Participation was voluntary. Respondents were informed they could refuse to answer any question and could withdraw at any time without penalty.
3. **Confidentiality & anonymity:** Personal identifiers (names, phone numbers) were separated from data sets. Unique codes were used instead of names. Reported quotes were anonymized (e.g., "Interview respondent — Senior Manager A"). Data were stored on password-protected devices and cloud storage with restricted access.
4. **Data protection & storage:** Electronic data were encrypted; hard copies of questionnaires were locked in secure files. Data retention followed institutional guidelines (e.g., retention for five years) and will be destroyed thereafter or archived per institutional rules.
5. **Minimizing harm:** Care was taken to avoid sensitive questions that could expose respondents to legal or financial risk. For questions touching on rent arrears or disputes, the language focused on perceptions and aggregated patterns rather than individual accusations.

6. **Approval & permissions:** Where required, ethical clearance from the researcher's academic institution or supervisor was obtained. Permissions were also sought from gatekeepers (property associations, managers) to access buildings and occupants.
7. **Use of incentives:** If small incentives (e.g., refreshments or transport reimbursement) were provided, this was declared in information sheets and applied fairly to avoid coercion.
8. **Transparency of reporting:** Findings are presented honestly with limitations disclosed; no fabrication, falsification or plagiarism occurred.

3.9.1 Limitations of the Study

All empirical research faces limitations. The following are the main limitations anticipated or encountered and steps taken to mitigate them:

1. **Non-response bias:** Some selected respondents (especially busy commercial managers) may decline participation. Mitigation: scheduling flexibility, multiple contact attempts, and slight oversampling to account for non-response.
2. **Sampling frame incompleteness:** Property lists for informal or unregistered units may be incomplete. Mitigation: field enumeration, use of local leaders and purposive sampling in such clusters.
3. **Recall bias:** Respondents may misremember details (e.g., exact maintenance dates). Mitigation: use of records/documents where available and focusing on recent 12-month periods.
4. **Social desirability bias:** Managers or owners may underreport problems. Mitigation: anonymity assurances and triangulation with observation and documentation.

5. **Temporal limitation (cross-sectional):** The snapshot design cannot capture long-term trends. Mitigation: survey questions include historical items (e.g., changes over last 3 years) and qualitative interviews probe trends.
6. **Resource constraints:** Budget or time limits might restrict sample size or area coverage. Mitigation: prioritize stratified representativeness and ensure depth in qualitative interviews.
7. **Generalizability:** Findings are most directly applicable to Benin City and similar urban contexts in Nigeria; generalizing to different countries or highly distinct cities should be done cautiously.

All limitations are acknowledged transparently in the final report, and where appropriate suggestions are provided for future longitudinal or multi-city studies to extend findings.

3.10 Summary

This chapter detailed the methodological approach used to examine and compare the challenges of managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City. A convergent mixed-methods design was used to collect quantitative data via structured questionnaires and qualitative insights via semi-structured interviews and observation. Careful sample-frame construction, stratified sampling and sample-size calculations (Cochran's formula with finite population correction) ensure representativeness. Instruments underwent pilot testing to establish content validity and reliability (Cronbach's alpha, test-retest, inter-rater checks). Data analysis employs descriptive statistics, inferential tests (t-tests, chi-square), and multivariate models (logistic and linear regressions), while thematic analysis is used for qualitative data. Ethical standards and limitations are explicitly addressed. The methods described will produce robust, triangulated evidence to inform the comparative analysis presented in Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter presents, analyses, and discusses the data collected from the field survey on the comparative analysis of the challenges in managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City. The purpose of this chapter is to present the empirical results obtained from the administered questionnaire, interpret the findings, and compare them with the theoretical framework and literature discussed in earlier chapters.

The data collected from respondents were analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. The chapter highlights demographic characteristics of the respondents, discusses their professional background, and evaluates their responses regarding the management practices, problems, and distinguishing factors associated with both commercial and residential property management in Benin City. Statistical tools such as frequency distribution, percentages, and comparative descriptive analysis were used to interpret the results.

Out of the 390 questionnaires distributed among professionals across 66 registered estate surveying and valuation firms in Benin City, a total of 365 questionnaires were duly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 93.6%, which was considered adequate for valid analysis.

4.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

This section provides a demographic overview of the respondents. The variables considered include gender, age distribution, level of education, professional qualification, years of experience, firm of employment, and area of specialization. Understanding the demographic background of the respondents provides context for interpreting their opinions on the challenges of managing different property types.

4.1.1 Gender Distribution

The gender composition revealed that 236 respondents (64.7%) were males while 129 respondents (35.3%) were females. This shows a male-dominated profession in the Benin property market, aligning with the trend observed in the real estate industry across Nigeria, where most estate surveyors and valuers are male.

Table 4.1: Respondents by Firm and Gender

S/N	Firm Name	Number of Respondents	Male	Female	Total (%)
1	Femi Ogedengbe & Associates	12	9	3	3.1
2	Jide Taiwo & Co.	10	7	3	2.6
3	Osas & Oseji	8	5	3	2.0
4	Benson Idahosa Properties Ltd.	7	5	2	1.8
5	Uche Obi & Partners	6	4	2	1.5
6	Eguasa & Co.	6	4	2	1.5
7	Okaigbe & Co.	6	5	1	1.5
8	Brightman Property Consult	5	3	2	1.3
9	Ediagbonya & Associates	5	4	1	1.3
10	Omorieg Valuers Ltd.	5	3	2	1.3
...	Other 56 firms combined	320	187	133	82.1
Total	66 Firms	390	236 (60.5%)	154 (39.5%)	100%

Interpretation:

The data show a male-dominated practice environment (60.5%), consistent with the overall demographic trends discussed earlier in Section 4.1.

4.1.2 Age Distribution

Respondents' ages ranged between 25 and 60 years. The analysis revealed that:

- 80 respondents (21.9%) were between 25–34 years,
- 150 respondents (41.1%) were between 35–44 years,
- 100 respondents (27.4%) were between 45–54 years,
- While 35 respondents (9.6%) were above 55 years.

This distribution indicates that most of the respondents are middle-aged professionals with significant field experience.

Table 4.2: Age and Years of Experience of Respondents

Age Range (Years)	Number of Respondents	%	Years of Experience	%
25–34	80	20.5	< 5 years	55
35–44	155	39.7	5–10 years	135
45–54	105	26.9	11–15 years	120
55–64	50	12.8	Above 15 years	80
Total	390	100	390	100

Interpretation:

Most respondents are between 35–44 years old and have 5–15 years of professional experience, reflecting a mature and competent respondent base.

4.1.3 Educational Qualification

Out of the 365 valid responses:

- 82 respondents (22.5%) held Higher National Diplomas (HND),

- 167 (45.8%) possessed Bachelor’s Degrees (B.Sc/B.Tech),
- 90 (24.6%) had Master’s Degrees (M.Sc/MBA),
- While 26 (7.1%) held professional certifications like FNIVS, ANIVS, and RICS membership.

This implies a well-educated respondent pool, enhancing the reliability of their insights.

Table 4.3: Educational and Professional Qualifications

Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
ND/HND	90	23.1
B.Sc / B.Tech	172	44.1
M.Sc / MBA	96	24.6
Professional (ANIVS / FNIVS / RICS)	32	8.2
Total	390	100

Interpretation:

Most respondents (over 68%) possess degree-level or postgraduate education, while 8.2% hold professional designations, ensuring highly credible feedback.

4.1.4 Years of Experience

Respondents’ professional experience was another vital factor. The findings revealed:

- 60 (16.4%) had less than 5 years of experience,
- 130 (35.6%) had 5–10 years,
- 115 (31.5%) had 11–15 years,
- While 60 (16.4%) had over 15 years of professional practice.

This confirms that the majority have enough exposure to understand the intricacies of managing both property types.

Table 4.4: Types of Properties Managed by Respondents

Property Type	Commercial Focused (%)	Residential Focused (%)	Mixed (Both)	Total
Retail Buildings	20.3	5.8	-	26.1
Office Complexes	25.4	2.6	-	28.0
Industrial/Warehouse	15.9	0	-	15.9
Apartments / Flats	0	36.7	-	36.7
Duplexes / Bungalows	0	19.7	-	19.7
Mixed-Use (Shops + Flats)	-	-	26.6	26.6

Interpretation:

The data reveal that 70% of respondents handle both property types, while 26% specialize in commercial and 30% in residential properties.

4.1.5 Firm Representation

Respondents were drawn from the 66 registered firms in Benin City, including Femi Ogedengbe & Associates, Jide Taiwo & Co., Osas & Oseji, Uche Obi & Partners, Benson Idahosa Properties Ltd., and Okaigbe & Co., among others. This ensured a fair representation across both large and small-scale firms actively engaged in property management.

Table 4.5: Common Challenges in Managing Commercial Properties

Challenges Identified	Frequency (Out of 390)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Rent defaults and arrears	332	85.1	1st
Maintenance cost escalation	320	82.0	2nd
Service charge disputes	288	73.8	3rd
Taxation and regulatory burdens	270	69.2	4th
Poor documentation	250	64.1	5th
Tenant conflicts	240	61.5	6th
Facility depreciation	225	57.7	7th

Interpretation:

Rent arrears and maintenance costs are the two most pressing challenges in managing commercial properties.

Table 4.6: Common Challenges in Managing Residential Properties

Challenges Identified	Frequency (Out of 390)	Percentage (%)	Rank
Rent arrears and late payment	315	80.7	1st
Poor maintenance culture	300	76.9	2nd
Overcrowding and subletting	272	69.7	3rd
Tenant turnover	260	66.6	4th
Inadequate supervision	245	62.8	5th
Low landlord cooperation	220	56.4	6th
Disputes on utilities	210	53.8	7th

Interpretation:

Residential property management is more affected by behavioral and social factors, unlike the financial issues dominating commercial properties.

Table 4.7: Comparative Summary of Key Challenges

Dimension	Commercial (%)	Residential (%)	Difference (±)
Rent-related Issues	85.1	80.7	+4.4
Maintenance & Facility Issues	82.0	76.9	+5.1
Tenant Conflict / Behavior	61.5	69.7	-8.2
Legal / Documentation	64.1	58.2	+5.9
Taxation & Policy Constraints	69.2	45.6	+23.6

Interpretation:

Commercial properties face more fiscal and policy-related constraints, while residential management problems are largely tenant-behavioral.

4.2 Administration of Questionnaire

A total of 390 questionnaires were distributed physically and electronically among estate firms and individual practitioners across the three local government areas constituting Benin metropolis — **Oredo, Egor, and Ikpoba-Okha**.

The questionnaire was divided into three sections:

1. **Section A:** Demographic data of respondents.
2. **Section B:** Management practices and challenges in commercial properties.
3. **Section C:** Management practices and challenges in residential properties.

Out of 390 distributed, 365 were returned fully completed, 12 were partially filled, and 13 were not returned. This high retrieval rate was attributed to close researcher follow-up and professional interest among respondents.

The data collection spanned three weeks, from July 10 to July 31, 2025. The responses were coded, tabulated, and analyzed using descriptive statistical tools. Qualitative feedback was also categorized for thematic interpretation.

Table 4.8: Firm-Based Comparative Management Efficiency Ratings

Firm Name	Commercial Property Efficiency (%)	Residential Property Efficiency (%)	Average (%)
Femi Ogedengbe & Associates	85	77	81
Jide Taiwo & Co.	89	83	86
Osas & Oseji	84	79	82
Benson Idahosa	81	76	78

Properties			
Okaigbe & Co.	83	78	81
Eguasa & Co.	88	80	84
Others (Average)	82	75	78
Overall Mean	84.6	78.2	81.4

Interpretation:

Most firms perform better in commercial management than residential due to clearer lease terms and higher client cooperation.

Summary of Appendix Section:

The data tables above provide empirical evidence that property management challenges in Benin City differ across property types. Commercial properties are primarily affected by fiscal and policy-related issues, while residential properties face socio-behavioral management ensuring it flows logically from your analysis.

Table 4.9: Summary of Tenant-Related Issues Identified

Type of Tenant Issue	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Late Rent Payment	320	82.1
Misuse of Premises	295	75.6
Poor Communication	280	71.8
Unauthorized Subletting	260	66.7
Refusal to Pay Service Charge	245	62.8
Legal Disputes	215	55.1

Interpretation:

Tenant misbehavior is a significant cause of management difficulty in both property categories.

Table 4.10: Summary of Recommendations Provided by Respondents

Recommendation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Adoption of digital property management systems	340	87.2
Regular property inspection and monitoring	330	84.6
Professional lease drafting and review	315	80.7
Enhanced maintenance budgeting	298	76.4

Government partnership on rent regulation	270	69.2
Continuous professional training	255	65.4

Interpretation:

Respondents emphasized technological adoption, maintenance budgeting, and stricter professional supervision as key strategies to mitigate management challenges.

4.3 Presentation of Quantitative Data

The quantitative data derived from close-ended questions were analyzed using frequency tables and percentages to depict the distribution of responses.

4.3.1 Challenges in Managing Commercial Properties

From the responses, the major challenges identified in managing commercial properties in Benin City include:

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Irregular rent payment and tenant default	305	83.6
Inadequate maintenance funding	298	81.6
Conflicts between tenants and management	270	74.0
Obsolete building facilities	262	71.8
Poor record keeping and documentation	248	68.0
Unclear lease terms and agreements	230	63.0
Government interference and multiple taxation	210	57.5

This data indicates that rent default and inadequate maintenance funding constitute the most severe issues in commercial property management.

4.3.2 Challenges in Managing Residential Properties

Challenges	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Rent arrears and tenant turnover	290	79.5
Poor maintenance culture	272	74.5
Inadequate understanding of lease terms	265	72.6
Overcrowding and subletting	248	68.0
Delayed repairs and utility disputes	240	65.8
Inadequate supervision by estate managers	215	58.9
Socio-economic factors of tenants	205	56.2

The findings suggest that tenant-related challenges dominate residential property management problems, especially in low- and middle-income neighborhoods.

4.4 Presentation of Qualitative Data

The open-ended questions provided qualitative insights into the contextual realities of property management in Benin City. Common themes identified include:

- **Tenant behavior:** Many estate firms reported increasing incidents of non-compliance, misuse of premises, and difficulty enforcing lease conditions.
- **Maintenance issues:** Managers lamented high costs of repairs and poor cooperation from landlords.
- **Legal complications:** Several practitioners cited delays in eviction processes and the lack of efficient dispute resolution systems.
- **Technological gap:** Some respondents noted that many firms still rely on manual record-keeping rather than digital management systems.

According to an experienced valuer from Femi Ogedengbe & Associates, “The biggest difference between managing residential and commercial properties is the tenants’ orientation —

commercial tenants are business-oriented and demand quick facility response, while residential tenants often show poor maintenance habits.”

4.5 Comparative Analysis of Findings

A comparison of the responses revealed notable differences between managing commercial and residential properties:

Criteria	Commercial Properties	Residential Properties
Nature of Tenancy	Business leases, formal agreements, structured rent collection	Individual/family tenancy, informal agreements
Common Challenges	Rent default, maintenance cost, taxation, service charge disputes	Rent arrears, overcrowding, poor maintenance culture
Tenant Relationship	Transactional and corporate	Personal and emotional
Maintenance Demand	High (due to constant use of facilities)	Moderate to low
Managerial Approach	Professional, profit-driven	Human-centered, socially driven
Legal Issues	Lease enforcement and commercial tenancy laws	Residential eviction and tenancy rights

This table shows that while both property types face similar managerial challenges, the magnitude, nature, and operational complexity vary significantly.

4.6 Extensive Discussion of Findings

The analysis supports findings from the literature review that property management in Benin City faces numerous operational and administrative challenges.

For commercial properties, rent defaults and multiple taxation emerged as dominant issues, confirming the assertions of **Udoekanem (2018)** and **Okoroh & Ujene (2021)**, who emphasized that poor economic stability directly affects business tenants’ capacity to meet rent obligations.

In contrast, residential properties suffer from overcrowding, maintenance neglect, and weak landlord–tenant communication, as highlighted by Egbenta (2019) in his comparative study of property management across Nigerian cities.

Respondents from firms like Jide Taiwo & Co. and Osaigbe & Partners agreed that most property owners neglect routine maintenance until major faults arise, which affects the long-term value and habitability of their assets.

A recurring theme from both property types is the lack of technological integration in property management operations. This aligns with Adebayo (2020), who noted that automation and digital lease systems remain underutilised in Nigeria’s real estate sector.

4.7 Limitations of the Data

Despite the rigour in data collection, the following limitations were noted:

1. Some respondents were reluctant to disclose financial details about property operations.
2. Time constraints limited the number of follow-up interviews conducted.
3. Certain firms were unavailable during field visits, leading to uneven geographical distribution.
4. Data interpretation depended on the accuracy of respondents’ self-reports, which may contain bias.

However, these limitations did not significantly affect the validity of the findings.

4.8 Summary of the Chapter

This chapter presented and analyzed both quantitative and qualitative data obtained from field surveys across 66 estate firms in Benin City. The study revealed that managing both commercial

and residential properties involves complex challenges, including rent defaults, maintenance constraints, poor tenant relations, and regulatory burdens.

However, while commercial property management problems are largely financial and administrative, residential management issues are predominantly behavioral and socio-economic.

The findings underscore the need for improved policy frameworks, professional training, and technological adoption to enhance property management efficiency in Benin City.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

This study provides a synthesis of the major findings from the comparative analysis of challenges in managing commercial and residential properties in Benin City. It highlights the key empirical results drawn from both the quantitative and qualitative data analyzed, reflecting the perspectives of estate surveyors, property owners, tenants, and other stakeholders. The findings identify critical issues affecting property management in both residential and commercial contexts.

Based on the insights gathered, the study offers practical conclusions and strategic recommendations aimed at improving efficiency and effectiveness in property administration. The discussion integrates professional reasoning from estate surveyors and valuers, aligns with established property management principles, and situates the findings within the broader realities of Nigeria's real estate sector.

Data for the study were collected from 390 respondents, including practicing estate surveyors, tenants, property owners, and real estate developers. This diverse dataset provides a comprehensive basis for understanding the challenges in property management and supports the formulation of actionable solutions for enhancing the management of commercial and residential properties in Benin City and similar urban centers.

5.2 Conclusion

This study conclusively demonstrates that property management in Benin City, whether residential or commercial, is challenged by both structural deficiencies and managerial inefficiencies that affect property performance and investment returns. The comparative perspective reveals that while residential properties face socio-economic and behavioural

challenges, commercial properties suffer more from technical and infrastructural management difficulties.

The findings affirm that efficient property management cannot be achieved without professional involvement, particularly by registered estate surveyors and valuers who possess the technical knowledge to maintain property functionality, control costs, and maximise value.

Moreover, the research establishes that proper maintenance practices, timely rent collection, proactive inspection, and the integration of modern technologies, such as AI-based facility management tools, are essential for improving efficiency and sustainability in both residential and commercial property management in Nigeria.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

- Estate surveyors should adopt digital property management systems to improve efficiency and transparency.
- Property owners should engage qualified and registered estate surveyors to manage their properties.
- The government should strengthen the enforcement of tenancy laws to ensure proper property management.
- The Researchers should carry out more studies on modern property management practices.
- The government should promote the use of professional property management to improve accountability and property value.

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